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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the relationship between soldiers' satisfaction with the environment for families in the Army and satisfaction with the military way of life. The report is based on a secondary analysis of the responses of a stratified random sample of 9,198 Army personnel, a sample that participated in the 1985 Department of Defense Worldwide Survey of Officer and Enlisted Personnel. The importance of satisfaction with the environment for families to overall satisfaction with the military way of life was examined separately for officers and enlisted participants from six household types: single; single parent; married to a military spouse with no children; married to a military spouse with children; married to a civilian spouse with no children; and married to a civilian spouse with children. The results suggest that satisfaction with the environment for families in the Army was a significant predictor of overall satisfaction for 4 of the 12 sample subgroups: enlisted members married to other military members with no children; enlisted members married to other military members with children; enlisted members married to civilian spouses with children; and officers married to civilian spouses with children. In each case, the results supported the major prediction of the research: the more satisfaction members have with the environment for families in the Army, the greater the satisfaction with the military way of life.
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Technical Report 864

The Relationship of Family Satisfaction to Satisfaction with the Military Way of Life Among Soldiers

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November 1989

United States Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences

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This research supports The Army Family Action Plans (1984-1989) by investigating the relationship between soldiers' satisfaction with the environment for families in the Army and satisfaction with the military way of life.

The report is based on a secondary analysis of the responses of a stratified random sample of 9,198 U.S. Army personnel. The sample used is the Army sample that participated in the 1985 DoD Worldwide Survey of Officer and Enlisted Personnel. The importance of satisfaction with the environment for families to overall satisfaction with the military way of life was examined separately for officers and enlisted participants from six household types: (a) single, (b) single parent, (c) married to a military spouse with no children, (d) married to a military spouse with children, (e) married to a civilian spouse with no children, and (f) married to a civilian spouse with children. Seventeen additional variables measuring satisfaction with other military issues were used as (Continued)

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control variables in examining this relationship, as well as the gender and pay grade of the member.

The results suggest that satisfaction with the environment for families in the Army was a significant predictor of overall satisfaction for four of the twelve sample subgroups: (a) enlisted members married to other military members with no children, (b) enlisted members married to other military members with children, (c) enlisted members married to civilian spouses with children, and (d) officers married to civilian spouses with children. In each case, the results supported the major prediction of the research: the more satisfaction members have with the environment for families in the Army, the greater their satisfaction with the military way of life.

Satisfaction with the environment for families in the Army was not a significant predictor of overall satisfaction with the military way of life for eight of the twelve subgroups: (a) single enlisted members and single officers, (b) single parent enlisted members and single parent officers, (c) officers who were married to other military members with or without children, and (d) enlisted members and officers who were married to civilian spouses without children.

Technical Report 864

The Relationship of Family Satisfaction to Satisfaction with the Military Way of Life Among Soldiers

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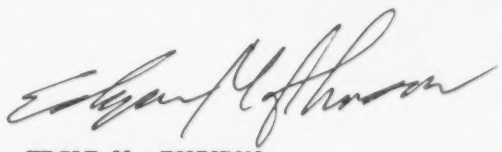
The Army Family Research Program (AFRP) is a five-year integrated research program started in November 1986 in response to research mandated by both the CSA White Paper, 1983: The Army Family and The Army Family Action Plans (1984-1989). The objective of the research is to support the Army Family Actions Plans through research products that will (1) determine the demographic characteristics of Army families, (2) identify motivators and detractors to soldiers remaining in the Army, (3) develop pilot programs to improve family adaptation to Army life, and (4) increase operational readiness.

The research is being conducted by the U.S. Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences (ARI) with assistance from Research Triangle Institute, Caliber Associates, HumRRO, and the University of North Carolina. It is funded by Army research and development funds set aside for this purpose under Management Decision Package (1U6S).

The Army sponsor for this effort, the Army Community and Family Support Center (CFSC), reviewed and approved an earlier draft of this report. Their comments indicate that the contents of this report will be useful in revising Army programs and policies.



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THE RELATIONSHIP OF FAMILY SATISFACTION TO SATISFACTION WITH THE MILITARY WAY OF LIFE AMONG SOLDIERS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Requirement:

To support The Army Family Action Plans (1984-1989) by investigating the relationship between soldiers' satisfaction with the environment for families and satisfaction with the military way of life.

Procedure:

The report is based on a secondary analysis of the responses of a stratified random sample of 9,198 U.S. Army personnel from the Army sample that participated in the 1985 DoD Worldwide Survey of Officer and Enlisted Personnel. The importance of satisfaction with the environment for families to overall satisfaction with the military way of life was examined separately for officers and participants from six household types: (a) single, (b) single parent, (c) married to a military spouse with no children, (d) married to a military spouse with children, (e) married to a civilian spouse with no children, and (f) married to a civilian spouse with children. Seventeen additional variables measuring satisfaction with other military issues were used as control variables in examining this relationship, as well as the gender and pay grade of the member.

Results:

The results suggest that satisfaction with the environment for families in the Army was a significant predictor of overall satisfaction for four of the twelve sample subgroups: (a) enlisted members married to other military members with no children, (b) enlisted members married to other military members with children, (c) enlisted members married to civilian spouses with children, and (d) officers married to civilian spouses with children. In each case, the results supported the major prediction of the research: the more satisfaction that members have with the environment for families in the Army, the greater their satisfaction with the military way of life.

Satisfaction with the environment for families in the Army was not a significant predictor of overall satisfaction with the military way of life for eight of the twelve subgroups: (a) neither single enlisted members nor single officers, (b) neither single parent enlisted members nor single parent officers, (c) officers who were married to other military members with or without children, and (d) neither enlisted members nor officers who were married to civilian spouses without children.

Utilization of Findings:

The Army sponsor for the research, the U.S. Army Community and Family Support Center (CFSC), reviewed an earlier draft of this report. Their comments indicate that the contents of this report will be useful in revising Army programs and policies.

THE RELATIONSHIP OF FAMILY SATISFACTION TO SATISFACTION WITH THE MILITARY WAY OF LIFE AMONG SOLDIERS

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THE RELATIONSHIP OF FAMILY SATISFACTION TO SATISFACTION WITH THE MILITARY WAY OF LIFE AMONG SOLDIERS

Introduction

Service in the Armed Forces involves more than just an occupational choice; it is the selection of a lifestyle that permeates almost every aspect of a person's life. Few civilian occupations require the high level of commitment and dedication from their employees that the military services require (e.g., to be available and ready to defend the constitution of the United States anywhere in the world; to accept the possibility of hazardous duty assignments, including the possibility of injury, captivity, or even death). Even fewer ask their employees, much less members of the employee's family, to make the range of personal and family sacrifices to accommodate the work mission (e.g., frequent relocations, extended family separations, and the general subservience of family needs to military objectives and requirements).

On the other hand, few civilian employers offer their employees the encompassing range of benefits that tie their employees as well as members of their families to the organization both economically and socially (e.g., job security, housing and housing allowances, medical and dental care, and retirement after 20 years of service). In addition, the military services may include a number of agencies and organizations that provide an impressive range of support services and programs for military members and their families (e.g., family service and support centers, recreational services, child care, and spouse employment centers).

This unique combination of occupational demands and occupational supports underscores Goffman's (1961) description of various military situations as examples of a "total institution," institutions that have an encompassing impact on the lives of its members. In a more recent analysis, M. W. Segal (1986) used Coser's (1974) notion of the "greedy" institution to describe the great demands that the military organization places on the commitment, time, and energy of its service members and their families.

Over the last decade, the military services have given increased attention to quality of life issues for service members and their families (Hunter, 1982). This has been stimulated by demographic shifts from a single to a predominantly married force (Bowen & Scheirer, 1986; Hunter, 1982; M. W. Segal, 1986), increased competition with the civilian economy for the declining number of 18-22 year olds available for military service (Bowen, 1986a), and expanded recognition by military leadership of the interdependence among quality of life issues, family well-being and satisfaction, job productivity, and mission readiness and member retention (Bowen, 1987; Bowen & Scheirer, 1986; Orthner & Pittman, 1986; M. W. Segal, 1986). This heightened interest among military leadership has provided the impetus for the increasing incorporation of support programs and services for military personnel and their families (American Family, 1985).

Despite the new steps that the military services have taken to intensify their efforts on behalf of service members and their families, there has been

a lack of systematic attention to testing the assumptions that provide the basis for policy and program development. Based on a spillover model of linkages between life spheres, an overriding assumption has been the perceived importance of members' satisfaction with the environment for families as one of the key determinants of their satisfaction with the military way of life (Martin & Orthner, 1989). Given the established linkage between satisfaction with the military way of life and important military-related outcomes (e.g., spouse support of the members' career, retention intentions, mission readiness) (Bowen, 1986b; Moybray & Scheirer, 1985; Orthner & Bowen, 1982; Orthner & Pittman, 1986; Szoc, 1982), it is often assumed that policies and programs which enhance the quality of the military environment for families will indirectly increase these important military-related outcomes.

In the context of greater emphasis on program accountability in the military services today, as well as recent budget cutbacks in defense spending, it becomes increasingly important to quantify assumptions that provide the foundation for policies and programs that are intended to increase the quality of life for members and their families. Only then, can the development, continuation, and expansion of those policies and programs be based on facts, rather than assumptions, as well as be targeted to members and families for whom their impacts will yield the greatest return on military investments.

While the link between member satisfaction with the environment for families and overall satisfaction with the military way of life seems intuitively obvious, it has not received sufficient empirical testing. Although research does exist that suggests the importance of family factors to overall satisfaction with the military way of life (Bowen, 1986b; Orthner & Bowen, 1982; Orthner & Pittman, 1986; Szoc, 1982), past investigations have not explored this relationship in the context of additional satisfiers that may mitigate or enhance this relationship, such as job and community factors. In addition, past research has not adequately explored how this relationship may vary across population subgroups, varying by such factors as marital status, household composition, military status of the spouse, and rank. Last, there has been an imbalance between the services in exploring this relationship. Much of this research has been restricted to Air Force and Navy populations.

Drawing on secondary analysis of the 1985 DoD Survey of Officer and Enlisted Personnel, this investigation examines the relationship between satisfaction with the environment for families and satisfaction with the military way of life among Army personnel. This relationship is examined not only in the context of a range of other quality-of-military-life satisfiers, but is also examined separately for officers and enlisted members in each of six household patterns: (a) single; (b) single parent; (c) married to a military spouse with no children; (d) married to a military spouse with children; (e) married to a civilian spouse with no children; and (f) married to a civilian spouse with children.

Based on prior research in the military services (Bowen, 1986b; Orthner & Bowen, 1982; Orthner & Pittman, 1986; Szoc, 1982), as well as on current family-oriented policy and program assumptions espoused by senior Army

leadership, (Chief of Staff, U.S. Army, 1983), it was hypothesized that the more satisfaction that members have with the environment for families in the Army, the greater their overall satisfaction with the military as a way of life. Additional support for this hypothesis is suggested by research with civilian samples where satisfaction with the overall quality of life is determined by additive satisfaction across multiple sub-domains, including family-related variables (Campbell, Converse, & Rogers, 1976). In the absence of comparative research regarding this hypothesis across population subgroups in the military, it was also predicted here that the relative influence of satisfaction with the environment for families on the level of overall satisfaction would be equally strong across population subgroups.

Given the exploratory nature of the investigation, all 18 quality-of-military-life indicators included on the 1985 DoD Survey of Officer and Enlisted Personnel, including the independent variable (i.e., satisfaction with the environment for families), were specified in a single equation analysis strategy and estimated by multiple regression across rank and household patterns (see Appendix A for the scale that contained these 18 quality-of-military-life indicators). In view of the preliminary nature of work in the area, there was a lack of strong empirical or theoretical bases for including or excluding any of these additional quality-of-military-life indicators as control variables in the model. Within rank and household pattern subgroups, two additional control variables were entered into the equation: pay grade as a linear variable and gender of the member. This analysis strategy made it possible to examine the unique contribution that members' satisfaction with the environment for families in the Army has on their overall satisfaction with the military as a way of life relative to other quality-of- military-life indicators, pay grade and gender, as well as to examine this relationship within household and rank groups.

Method

Source of Data

The data were obtained from a stratified random sample of men and women who were surveyed as part of the 1985 DoD Worldwide Survey of Officer and Enlisted Personnel which also included members of the Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps. This survey was conducted for the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Force Management and Personnel) by the Defense Manpower Data Center, and was designed to collect information in ten major areas: (a) military demographics; (b) present and past locations; (c) personnel reaction to recent changes in military compensation and benefits; (d) factors affecting readiness and retention; (e) projected reactions to changes in personnel management; (f) career attitudes and experiences of women and minorities; (g) family characteristics; (h) the impact of military policies on family life; (i) family economic well-being; and (j) adequacy of family services.

The overall sample design was stratified first by service. Within each service, enlisted samples were stratified by length of service and gender, and officer samples were stratified by gender. Both officers as a group and female members (enlisted and officer) were sampled at a higher rate to ensure

adequate sample sizes for analysis. Within each stratification cell, members were randomly selected for survey participation. Since members with less than four months of service were excluded from the sample frame, and since there was a period of several months between sample selection and survey administration, members who completed the survey had at least ten months of service.

Within the Army, the survey was coordinated through the Soldier and Family Policy Division of the Human Resources Development Directorate, Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel (DAPE-HRP/F). Survey administration was handled through the commanding officers of units containing individuals selected for survey participation.

Based on detailed survey protocols, each commanding officer was responsible for distributing and collecting sealed survey packets from survey respondents. Any member who had separated from the service since sample selection was not included in the final sample. However, attempts were made to survey members who were selected for participation but who were on temporary duty assignments or who had transferred to a new duty station.

The data for this analysis are based on a stratified random sample of 24,217 active-duty officer and enlisted personnel serving in the U.S. Army in the United States or overseas on 30 September 1984. The overall Army response rate was 65.2% for officers (N = 4,997) and 59.1% from enlisted members (N = 19,220) — respectable survey response rates given the voluntary nature of the survey and the logistics of data collection. The response rate from Army members was somewhat lower than the overall DoD response rate of 76.8% for officers and 70.1% for enlisted members. The Defense Manpower Data Center (1986) thought that the greater mobility of Army personnel compared to the other services might account for the comparatively lower Army response rate. For a comprehensive description of the design and implementation of the 1985 DoD Survey, the reader should consult the Description of Officers and Enlisted Personnel in the U.S. Armed Forces (Volume 1) by the Defense Manpower Data Center (1986).

For purpose of analysis, respondents were divided into six subgroups based upon a combination of the respondent's marital status, the presence or absence of children in the household, and whether the respondent was married to a military or a civilian spouse: (a) single; (b) single parent; (c) married to a military spouse with no children; (d) married to a military spouse with children; (e) married to a civilian spouse with no children; and (f) married to a civilian spouse with children. Data files for these six subgroups were constructed by dividing the Army data into six non-overlapping files based on subgroup parameters. For small files, such as single parents, all cases within the data file were retained for analysis. For large files, such as single members and members married to civilian spouses with and without children, sub-files of approximately 2,000 random cases were created to make the size of files more comparable across groups for purposes of cross comparison as well as to reduce the cost of data analysis. The six files were subsequently divided into enlisted and officer sub-files, creating twelve subgroups for purpose of analysis. Because of their unique status in the military services as well as their small numbers within the sample, warrant

officers were excluded from the analysis. Effective sample sizes as well as selected demographic characteristics of the twelve subgroups are given in Table 1.

Measurement of Variables

For purposes of the present research, the dependent variable, "satisfaction with the military way of life," was assessed by a single item. Respondents were asked to rate their level of satisfaction in the context of all things considered on a seven point Likert-type scale ranging from "1" for "very dissatisfied" to "7" for "very satisfied."

The independent variable, satisfaction with the environment for families, was also assessed by a single item which was included in a list of 18 items associated with different issues peculiar to the military way of life. Respondents were asked to evaluate their level of satisfaction with the environment for families in the military considering current policies. Based on a five point Likert-type scale, response choices ranged from "1" for "very satisfied" to "5" for "very dissatisfied."

Nineteen control variables were also included in the analysis in an attempt to isolate better the unique relationship between the independent and dependent variable. Seventeen of these variables were measures of satisfaction with issues related to the military way of life other than the environment for families. These items covered personal freedom, acquaintances/friendships, work group/co-workers, assignment stability, pay and allowances, frequency of moves, retirement benefits, opportunity to serve one's country, satisfaction with current job, promotion opportunities, job training/in-service education, job security, working/environmental conditions, post service educational benefits (VEAP), medical care, dental care and commissary services. Identical to the instructions and response categories for the independent variable, respondents were asked to evaluate their level of satisfaction with each of these issues considering current policies on a five point Likert-type scale ranging from "1" for "very satisfied" to "5" for "very dissatisfied." (See the Appendix A for a review of these items as well as the independent and dependent variables as they appeared on the survey instrument.)

Two additional control variables were also included in the analysis based on their association with the independent and dependent variable in prior research: gender and pay grade of the member (Bowen, 1986b; Orthner & Bowen, 1982; Szoc, 1982). On the survey, each respondent was asked to specify their gender (i.e., male or female), as well as to indicate their specific pay grade. Enlisted members reported their pay grades from E-1 to E-9 (i.e., rank equivalents of Private to Command Sergeant Major), and officers reported their pay grades from O-1 to O-6 (i.e., Second Lieutenant to Colonel) or O-7 and above (i.e., General Officers).

Data Analysis

Assuming a linear and recursive system, the systems regression (SYSREG) procedure in the Statistical Analysis System (SAS) (SAS Institute, Inc., 1982)

was used to run twelve separate regression models using ordinary least squares. A listwise deletion of cases with missing data was used. As a consequence, the actual number of sample cases available for analysis by subgroup are fewer than the number of sample cases indicated by subgroup in Table 1.

The analysis was designed to estimate the unique contribution of the independent variable as well as the unique contribution of each control variable on the level of member satisfaction with the military way of life. Thus, the estimated parameters are the unique effect of each variable controlling for all other variables in the model. A .05 level of probability (p) was used to determine the overall statistical significance of the model as well as to examine the effect of each independent and control variable in the equation on the dependent variable.

In the analysis, gender was coded as a dummy variable with female as the reference category. The pay grade of the member within rank breakdowns was entered as a linear variable. Because of opposite coding directions of the dependent variable with the list of 18 issues particular to the military way of life, including the independent variable, the list of 18 issues was recoded to parallel the coding of the dependent variable: "very dissatisfied" to "very satisfied."

Results

Table 2 presents the means and standard deviations for the independent and dependent variable by sample subgroup. Table 3 presents the bivariate correlations between the dependent variable and the independent and control variables by sample subgroup.

The standardized regression coefficients (B) from analysis are shown in Table 4. These data indicate significant variation by subgroup in the relationship between the level of satisfaction of members with the environment for families in the Army and their level of satisfaction with the military way of life. Although there was no empirical basis for predicting variation in the strength of this relationship by subgroup, satisfaction with the environment for families was found to be significantly associated ($p < .05$) with the overall level of member satisfaction for only four of the twelve subgroups after control variables were entered into the equations: (a) enlisted members married to military spouses with no children (B = .072); (b) enlisted members married to military spouses with children (B = .072); (c) enlisted members married to civilian spouses with children (B = .094); and (d) officers married to civilian spouses with children (B = .133). In each case, the results supported the major prediction of the research: the more satisfaction that members have with the environment for families in the Army, the greater their satisfaction with the military way of life.

A major result to note in these analyses is the strength of the squared multiple correlation coefficient (R^2) for each subgroup analysis, which indicates the percentage of variance in the dependent variable accounted for by the independent variable and control variables in the equation. Although the ratio of independent and control variables in the equation to the number

Table 1

Demographic Profile of Sample Members

Characteristics	Sample Subgroup											
	Single No Children		Single Parent		Military Spouse No Children		Military Spouse Children		Civilian Spouse No Children		Civilian Spouse Children	
	E[a] (N=1650)	O[b] (N=331)	E (N=1181)	O (N=117)	E (N=1157)	O (N=256)	E (N=1638)	O (N=184)	E (N=1514)	O (N=447)	E (N=1505)	O (N=416)
Male	59.8%	45.9%	35.8%	52.1%	17.4%	18.8%	16.8%	24.5%	71.5%	84.1%	88.8%	94.2%
Mean Age	24.5	29.3	28.4	35.9	25.9	29.8	27.6	32.5	27.9	32.0	30.9	36.3
Race/Ethnic Group:												
Black	31.9%	13.0%	51.9%	20.5%	38.5%	5.5%	48.3%	14.7%	30.3%	8.7%	29.6%	7.5%
Hispanic	7.6%	3.9%	6.4%	4.3%	7.4%	3.9%	8.2%	6.0%	9.1%	3.6%	9.6%	3.8%
White	56.7%	78.9%	38.1%	72.6%	49.0%	86.7%	38.3%	75.5%	55.5%	84.6%	56.1%	87.3%
Other	3.9%	4.2%	3.6%	2.6%	5.0%	3.9%	5.1%	3.8%	5.0%	3.1%	4.6%	1.4%
Rank/Pay Grade												
E-2 to E-4	61.8%	—	31.2%	—	41.1%	—	25.3%	—	35.9%	—	17.0%	—
E-5 to E-6	32.6%	—	56.5%	—	52.2%	—	66.9%	—	51.4%	—	54.9%	—
E-7 to E-9	5.6%	—	12.3%	—	6.7%	—	7.9%	—	12.9%	—	28.1%	—
O-1 to O-2	—	43.5%	—	16.3%	—	28.1%	—	14.7%	—	27.1%	—	7.9%
O-3	—	41.1%	—	35.0%	—	56.3%	—	57.6%	—	42.7%	—	34.9%
O-4 to O-6	—	15.4%	—	48.8%	—	15.6%	—	27.7%	—	30.2%	—	57.3%
Marital Status												
Never Married	91.2%	90.0%	44.8%	17.9%	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Married	—	—	—	—	81.7%	86.0%	68.5%	75.5%	84.0%	89.7%	78.9%	87.3%
Remarried	—	—	—	—	18.2%	14.1%	13.5%	24.5%	16.1%	10.3%	21.1%	12.7%
Divorced	8.4%	10.0%	53.8%	76.0%	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Widowed	.4%	—	1.4%	6.0%	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Mean Years Married	—	—	—	—	3.5	4.3	4.4	6.3	5.4	7.3	8.1	12.1
Mean Age of Spouse	—	—	—	—	27.5	31.2	28.7	33.5	28.5	31.9	29.7	35.0
Mean Number of Children in Household	—	—	1.4	1.7	—	—	1.6	1.6	—	—	2.0	2.1

[a] E = Enlisted [b] O = Officer

Note. Because of rounding, percentages for each variable may not add to 100%.

Table 2

Means and Standard Deviations for the Independent and Dependent Variable by Sample Subgroup.

Satisfaction With:	Environment for Families[a]		Overall Military Way of Life[b]	
Sample Subgroup	M	SD	M	SD
Single - No Children				
Enlisted (N = 1426)	2.05	.81	4.20	1.76
Officer (N = 311)	2.20	.80	5.08	1.59
Single Parent				
Enlisted (N = 1033)	2.23	.95	4.59	1.61
Officer (N = 109)	2.44	.97	5.23	1.51
Military Spouse - No Children				
Enlisted (N = 1008)	2.24	.94	4.42	1.65
Officer (N = 241)	2.37	.92	5.10	1.52
Military Spouse - Children				
Enlisted (N = 1436)	2.31	.98	4.61	1.52
Officer (N = 170)	2.42	1.02	5.22	1.53
Civilian Spouse - No Children				
Enlisted (N = 20)	2.21	1.00	4.53	1.68
Officer (N=419)	2.38	.98	5.19	1.54
Civilian Spouse - Children				
Enlisted (N=1327)	2.22	1.04	4.73	1.61
Officer (N=398)	2.51	1.01	5.27	1.42

[a]Recoded range: 1 = Very Dissatisfied; 5 = Very Satisfied

[b]Range: 1 = Very Dissatisfied; 7 = Very Satisfied

Table 3

Correlations between the Dependent Variable and the Independent and Control Variables by Sample Subgroup

Independent/ Control Variables	Sample Subgroup											
	Single No Children		Single Parent		Military Spouse No Children		Military Spouse Children		Civilian Spouse No Children		Civilian Spouse Children	
	E[a] (N=1426)	O[b] (N=311)	E (N=1033)	O (N=109)	E (N=1008)	O (N=241)	E (N=1436)	O (N=170)	E (N=1320)	O (N=419)	E (N=1327)	O (N=398)
Environment for Families	.297	.288	.323	.432	.356	.490	.335	.503	.338	.351	.391	.475
Personal Freedom	.503	.495	.400	.457	.521	.590	.431	.632	.465	.450	.489	.481
Acquaintances/ Friendships	.296	.380	.278	.277	.279	.387	.296	.333	.301	.407	.347	.326
Work Group/Co-Workers	.345	.425	.304	.213	.329	.421	.341	.472	.357	.355	.367	.320
Assignment Stability	.330	.369	.327	.273	.347	.413	.333	.513	.351	.375	.406	.423
Pay and Allowances	.372	.396	.347	.341	.374	.378	.321	.445	.347	.363	.384	.398
Frequency of Moves	.229	.270	.276	.293	.280	.286	.271	.432	.303	.327	.295	.318
Retirement Benefits	.225	.272	.246	.435	.287	.293	.232	.268	.260	.331	.271	.353
Opportunity to Serve One's Country	.425	.269	.369	.343	.379	.416	.330	.356	.372	.352	.330	.300
Satisfaction with Current Job	.425	.528	.420	.431	.433	.494	.372	.546	.394	.454	.405	.279
Promotion Opportunities	.329	.355	.349	.316	.329	.327	.316	.430	.267	.350	.357	.353
Job Training/In-Service Education	.373	.352	.398	.332	.409	.453	.349	.435	.415	.318	.400	.315
Job Security	.382	.386	.346	.335	.359	.327	.362	.338	.387	.300	.396	.354
Working/Environmental Condition	.433	.412	.398	.406	.414	.529	.390	.439	.432	.362	.382	.439
Post Service Educational Benefits (VEAP)	.194	.098*	.211	.252	.192	.158	.217	.134	.210	.232	.250	.199
Medical Care	.275	.285	.299	.267	.286	.338	.246	.371	.288	.236	.308	.353
Dental Care	.276	.192	.234	.107*	.243	.181	.241	.241	.204	.180	.194	.162
Commissary Services	.203	.087*	.216	.283	.246	.287	.236	.373	.246	.189	.261	.356
Gender[c]	-.097	.043*	-.002*	.195	.067	.016*	-.007*	.028*	-.037*	.012*	.063	-.055*
Pay Grade	.285	.043*	.247	.126*	.231	.145	.186	.037*	.257	.195	.255	.092*

* All correlation coefficients are significant at the .05 level except those indicated designated by an asterisk.

[a] Enlisted
[b] Officer
[c] Female is the reference category.

Table 4

The Relative Influence of Satisfaction with the Environment for Families on Satisfaction with the Military Way of Life Among Soldiers (Standardized Regression Coefficients).

Independent/ Control Variables	Sample Subgroup											
	Single No Children		Single Parent		Military Spouse No Children		Military Spouse Children		Civilian Spouse No Children		Civilian Spouse Children	
	E[a] (N=1426)	O[b] (N=311)	E (N=1033)	O (N=109)	E (N=1008)	O (N=241)	E (N=1436)	O (N=170)	E (N=1320)	O (N=419)	E (N=1327)	O (N=398)
Environment for Families	.019c	.090	.040	.092	.072*	.099	.072*	.069	.035	.029	.094**	.133*
Personal Freedom	.224**	.235**	.121**	.153	.261**	.318**	.156**	.311**	.166**	.149*	.171**	.217**
Acquaintances/ Friendships	.021	.049	.034	-.044	.018	.020	.041	-.069	.040	.115*	.033	.010
Work Group/Co-workers	.010	.003	-.036	-.132	.014	-.035	.033	.192*	.030	.026	-.026	-.029
Assignment Stability	.013	.025	.027	-.014	-.001	.052	.046	.065	.024	-.033	.080*	.179*
Pay and Allowances	.116**	.092	.109**	.053	.130**	.102*	.069*	.157*	.095**	.165**	.119**	.130*
Frequency of Moves	.010	.038	.058*	.168	.037	.023	.071*	.056	.060*	.098*	.051*	-.051
Retirement Benefits	-.018	.076	.014	.224*	.051	.048	-.002	.041	.027	.062	.008	.072
Opportunity to Serve One's Country	.174**	-.008	.152**	.108	.143**	.183**	.120**	.042	.129**	.178**	.093**	.097*
Satisfaction with Current Job	.106**	.286**	.182**	.166	.117**	.146*	.089**	.113	.056	.189**	.073*	.040
Promotion Opportunities	.024	.068	.075*	-.056	.037	.094*	.078*	.098	.024	.123*	.054*	.116*
Job Training/In-Service Education	.036	.048	.081*	.081	.044	.097	.052	.059	.089*	.003	.024	-.009
Job Security	.064*	.063	.008	.109	.007	-.013	.055*	.049	.073*	-.024	.102**	.076
Working/Environmental Conditions	.082*	.016	.027	.203*	.077*	.159*	.073*	.025	.073*	.005	.008	.083
Post Service Educational Benefits (VEAP)	.016	-.072	-.013	-.006	.005	-.069	-.007	-.068	-.019	.037	-.023	-.019
Medical Care	.011	.081	.065	.047	.030	.110*	.012	.093	.103**	.058	.085*	.080
Dental Care	.035	-.010	.043	-.140	.029	-.191**	.061*	-.020	-.049	-.007	.020	-.057
Commissary Services	-.013	-.033	.005	.081	.020	.064	.026	.093	.066*	.054	.023	.107*
Gender[c]	-.037	-.015	-.081**	.120*	.029	-.042	-.017	-.022	-.043*	-.034	-.001	-.074
Pay Grade	.134**	-.014	.138**	-.012	.071**	.058	.101**	-.018	.123**	.081*	.093**	.052
R^2	.432**	.469**	.394**	.524**	.437**	.658**	.376**	.660**	.403**	.467**	.416**	.501**

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$

Note. Except for gender and pay grade, all variables were recoded to parallel the coding of the dependent variable.
[a] Enlisted; [b] Officer; [c] Female is the reference category.

of sample cases varied across subgroups, the squared multiple correlation coefficients ranged from low of .37 for enlisted members married to military spouses with children to a high of .66 for officers married to military spouses with children. Ten of the twelve coefficients were greater than .40. Overall, these coefficients are well above the .20 to .30 considered meaningful for this type of cross-sectional analysis.

Given the exploratory nature of the current investigation, the results of the analyses are briefly summarized for each of the twelve subgroups below. Because of the number of variables in the respective equations, after summarizing the strength of the relationship between the independent and dependent variable, only significant effects are highlighted between the control variables and the dependent variable in the respective analysis.

For the specific magnitude of the relationship of each variable in the analysis on the dependent variable by subgroup, the reader should consult Table 4. Unless otherwise indicated, in all cases where significant effects ($p < .05$) are noted between the 18 quality-of-military-life indicators and the dependent variable, the higher the satisfaction with the specific indicator, the higher the overall satisfaction with the military way of life.

Single Enlisted Members

Although satisfaction with the environment for families (B = .019) was not found to be a significant correlate of satisfaction with the military as a way of life, six of the remaining 17 quality-of-military-life indicators were significant predictors. For single enlisted members, satisfaction with personal freedom (B = .224) was the best relative predictor of overall satisfaction, followed by satisfaction with opportunity to serve one's country (B = .174), pay and allowances (B = .116), current job (B = .106), working/ environmental conditions (B = .082), and job security (B = .064). The pay grade (B = .134) of single enlisted members was also found to be significantly associated with overall satisfaction: the higher the pay grade, the higher the satisfaction.

Single Officers

Parallel to the finding for single enlisted members, the satisfaction of single officers with the environment for families in the Army (B = .090) was not a significant predictor of their overall satisfaction. In addition, only two of the other quality-of-military-life indicators were significant predictors of the dependent variable: satisfaction with current job (B = .286) followed closely by satisfaction with personal freedom (B = .235).

Enlisted Single Parents

For enlisted singles with children, satisfaction with family environment (B = .040) was not a significant predictor of overall satisfaction. However, seven of the remaining quality-of-military-life indicators were significant predictors. Satisfaction with current job (B = .182) was the best predictor, followed by satisfaction with the opportunity to serve one's country (B = .152), personal freedom (B = .121), pay and allowances (B = .109), job

training/in-service education (B = .081), promotion opportunities (B = .075) and frequency of moves (B = .058). Both gender (B = -.081) and pay grade (B = .138) were also significantly associated with the level of overall satisfaction reported by this subgroup. Male single parents were less satisfied with the military way of life than female single parents, and pay grade was positively associated with overall satisfaction: the higher the pay grade of the single parent, the higher the overall satisfaction.

Officer Single Parents

Even though the size of the coefficient was more than twice the size for officer single parents than for enlisted single parents, satisfaction with the environment for families (B = .092) was not a significant correlate of their overall satisfaction with the military way of life. Interestingly, compared to other subgroups, gender (B = .120) of the officer single parent had a strong and significant association with overall satisfaction. Male officers were significantly more satisfied with the military way of life than were female officers. For this group, the only other significant predictors of overall satisfaction were satisfaction with retirement benefits (B = .224) and satisfaction with work conditions (B = .203).

Enlisted Members Married to Military Spouses without Children

For this subgroup, satisfaction with the environment for families (B = .072) proved to be a significant predictor of overall satisfaction with the military way of life. However, when compared to the other quality-of-military-life indicators, its magnitude of effect was lower than satisfaction with personal freedom (B = .261), opportunity to serve one's country (B = .143), pay and allowances (B = .130), current job (B = .117), and satisfaction with working/environmental conditions (B = .077). Pay grade (B = .071) was also a significant predictor of overall satisfaction for this subgroup: the higher the pay grade, the higher the overall satisfaction.

Officer Members Married to Military Spouses without Children

Although satisfaction with family environment (B = .099) approached significance in predicting overall satisfaction with the military way of life, it did not meet the .05 probability level (p = .06). However, seven of the remaining quality-of-military-life indicators were statistically significant at the .05 level in predicting overall satisfaction. Listed in order of their relative magnitude of effect, these included satisfaction with personal freedom (B = .318), dental care (B = -.191), opportunity to serve one's country (B = .183), working/environmental conditions (B = .159), current job (B = .146), medical care (B = .110), pay and allowances (B = .102) and promotion opportunities (B = .094). Interestingly, satisfaction with dental care negatively affected the level of satisfaction that members of this subgroup had with the military way of life. Although not statistically significant for any of the other subgroups in the analysis, the negative effect of satisfaction with dental care on overall satisfaction was paralleled in all officer subgroups as well as in one of the six enlisted subgroups.

In all other cases where significant effects were found, the higher the satisfaction with the particular quality-of-military-life indicator, the higher the overall satisfaction.

Enlisted Members Married to Military Spouses with Children

Paralleling the finding for enlisted members married to military spouses with no children, satisfaction with the environment for families (B = .072) was a significant predictor of overall satisfaction with the military way of life. However, its overall effect on the dependent variable was smaller than the effect due to several of the other quality-of-military-life indicators: satisfaction with personal freedom (B = .156), satisfaction with the opportunity to serve one's country (B = .120), satisfaction with current job (B = .089), satisfaction with promotion opportunities (B = .078) and satisfaction with working/environmental conditions (B = .073). Other significant predictors of overall satisfaction for this subgroup included satisfaction with frequency of moving (B = .071), pay and allowances (B = .069), dental care (B = .061) and job security (B = .055). Pay grade (B = .101) was also a significant predictor of overall satisfaction: the higher the pay grade, the higher the overall satisfaction.

Officers Married to Military Spouses with Children

For this subgroup, satisfaction with the environment for families (B = .069) was not found to be a significant predictor of overall satisfaction with the military way of life. Satisfactions which were important to the overall satisfaction of officers with military spouses and children included satisfaction with personal freedom (B = .311), work group/co-workers (B = .192), and pay and allowances (B = .157), respectively.

Enlisted Members Married to Civilian Spouses without Children

This subgroup was not significantly influenced by satisfaction with the environment for families (B = .035) when they rated their overall satisfaction with the military way of life. Of the other quality-of-military-life indicators, nine were significantly associated with overall satisfaction for this subgroup. Of these, satisfaction with personal freedom (B = .166) was the best predictor, followed closely by satisfaction with the opportunity to serve one's country (B = .129) Satisfaction with medical care (B = .103), pay and allowances (B = .095), job training/in-service education (B = .089), job security (B = .073), working/environmental conditions (B = .073), commissary services (B = .066), and frequency of moving (B = .060) were also significant predictors, respectively. In addition, both gender (B = -.043) and pay grade (B = .123) were found to be significant correlates of overall satisfaction for this subgroup. Interestingly, although they are demographically few in number compared to other household types in the Army community, enlisted women married to civilian men reported higher overall satisfaction with the military way of life than enlisted men married to civilian women. Pay grade also was significantly correlated with the dependent variable: the higher the pay grade, the higher the overall satisfaction.

Officers Married to Civilian Spouses without Children

As for the enlisted subgroup above, satisfaction with the environment for families (B = .029) was not a significant predictor of overall satisfaction with the military way of life for this subgroup. However, seven of the remaining quality-of-military-life indicators were significant predictors of variation in the dependent variable. Satisfaction with current job (B = .189) was the best of these predictors, followed by satisfaction with the opportunity to serve one's country (B = .178), pay and allowances (B = .165), personal freedom (B = .149), promotion opportunities (B = .123), acquaintances/friendships (B = .115) and frequency of moving (B = .098). Pay grade (B = .081) was also significantly associated with the dependent variable for this subgroup: the higher the pay grade, the higher the satisfaction with the military way of life.

Enlisted Members Married to Civilian Spouses with Children

For this subgroup, the level of satisfaction with the environment for families (B = .094) was a significant predictor of overall satisfaction with the military way of life. However, three other satisfiers were actually better predictors of variation in the dependent variable than satisfaction with the environment for families: satisfaction with personal freedom (B = .171), pay and allowances (B = .119), and job security (B = .102). Six additional satisfiers were also significant predictors of the dependent variable, but had less relative effect on the dependent variable than the independent variable: satisfaction with the opportunity to serve one's country (B = .093), medical care (B = .085), assignment stability (B = .080), current job (B = .073), promotion opportunities (B = .054) and frequency of moving (B = .051). The analysis also suggested the importance of pay grade (B = .093) to the overall satisfaction of this subgroup: the higher the pay grade, the greater the satisfaction with the military way of life.

Officers Married to Civilian Spouses with Children

Paralleling the finding for enlisted members above, the level of satisfaction with the environment for families (B = .133) was also a significant predictor of overall satisfaction for this subgroup. However, its effect on the dependent variable as a predictor was comparatively less than two of the other satisfiers included in the list of quality-of-military-life indicators: satisfaction with personal freedom (B = .217) and assignment stability (B = .179). Other satisfiers that had less effect on the dependent variable than satisfaction with the environment for families, but which were statistically significant predictors, included satisfaction with pay and allowances (B = .130), promotion opportunities (B = .116), commissary services (B = .107) and opportunity to serve one's country (B = .097).

Conclusions and Discussion

In recent years, the military services have developed and revised a number of policies and practices to reduce the stressful effects of the military lifestyle on families as well as to provide additional support services to families. This response has been largely predicated on the assumption that

the level of satisfaction that members have with the environment for families in the military is directly related to their level of satisfaction with the military way of life. Despite the importance of this assumption to policy and program efforts, little empirical research has been directed toward critically examining this assumption. This is especially true for the different subgroups of the military population as well as in the context of additional variables that may mitigate or enhance the nature of this relationship.

Restricted to an Army sub-sample, the results of this investigation clearly suggest the differential effect that satisfaction with the environment for families has on the level of overall satisfaction with the military as a way of life across population subgroups. Although little empirical basis existed for predicting subgroup variations in the nature of this relationship, the effect of satisfaction with the environment for families on overall satisfaction with the military way of life was statistically significant for only four of the twelve subgroups: (a) enlisted members married to military spouses without children, (b) enlisted members married to military spouses with children, (c) enlisted members married to civilian spouses with children, and (d) officers married to civilian spouses with children.

Despite the overall statistical significance of these findings for the four groups of soldiers, the level of satisfaction with the environment for families did not emerge as a comparatively strong predictor of variation in the dependent variable, especially for the three enlisted groups. In general, the level of overall satisfaction of enlisted soldiers was influenced relatively more by their level of satisfaction with personal freedom, opportunity to serve one's country, pay and allowances, and satisfaction with current job. Even in the officer subgroup where satisfaction with the environment for families had a significant influence on overall satisfaction, its effect was comparatively less than the effect due to satisfaction with the level of personal freedom and assignment stability.

Still, these findings suggest that the development of family-oriented policies and practices in the Army may have a differential effect on the overall level of satisfaction with the military as a way of life among these four population subgroups. This effect may be either positive or negative depending on whether these policies and practices have a favorable or unfavorable influence on the member's perception toward the environment for families. It is especially important to underscore that each of these subgroups involved a married member, and that three out of four subgroups involved married enlisted members, as well as children in the household. Given that approximately 50 percent of the total force in the Army is comprised of members with these household characteristics (47% of enlisted members; 60% of officers) (Defense Manpower Data Center, 1986), these findings suggest the potential importance of policy and program efforts on behalf of married military members with family responsibilities, especially those directed toward married enlisted personnel and married officers with civilian spouses and children in the household.

Given the many potential stressors that can exaggerate the demands of single parenting in the military context, it was somewhat surprising to find that satisfaction with the environment for families had no significant effect

beyond the influence of control variables in the analysis on the level of satisfaction that single parents reported with the military as a way of life. Past research in the Air Force (Bowen & Orthner, 1986; Orthner & Bowen, 1982) had suggested that the overall satisfaction of single parent families with the military as a way of life might be particularly affected by their perceptions toward the environment for families in the military.

The results from the present analysis did suggest that gender was a critical predictor in determining the level of overall satisfaction among both enlisted and officer single parents. Interestingly, gender had an opposite effect on the overall level of satisfaction for officer and enlisted single parents. While enlisted female single parents reported greater overall satisfaction than enlisted male single parents, officer male single parents reported greater overall satisfaction than officer female single parents. It may be that it is more normative for females to be single parents in the enlisted as compared to the officer ranks. Demographically, it is much less typical for female officers than female enlisted members to have family responsibilities, and much more typical for officer men than officer women to have family responsibilities (Defense Manpower Data Center, 1986).

In general, this investigation indicates the differential influence of quality-of-military-life indicators on overall satisfaction with the military as a way of life across population subgroups. However, a particularly interesting finding was the relatively strong and significant association that satisfaction with personal freedom had with the dependent variable across all subgroups, except one: single officers with children. This finding parallels an earlier finding by Orthner and Bowen (1982) of the importance of satisfaction with rules and regulations on overall satisfaction with military life.

It is critical to underscore that members who were more satisfied with the level of personal freedom considering current policies reported more overall satisfaction than those who were more dissatisfied with the level of personal freedom. Although it is not possible to infer the perspective from which respondents evaluated their level of satisfaction on this item (i.e., the permissive/restrictive continuum), this finding may suggest that members prefer more of an "occupational" link to military service (i.e., where military service is seen more as a "job" than a "calling") as compared to a more "institutional" model of service (i.e., where the interest of the military organization is seen to transcend individual self-interest) (Moskos, 1986; D. R. Segal, 1986). Although the relative importance of satisfaction with "pay and allowances" and "current job" in explaining variation in the dependent variable across population subgroups would support such an "occupational" interpretation, the relative importance of "opportunity to serve one's country" on overall satisfaction across subgroups would anchor more of an "institutional" interpretation. Depending on the interpretation of the response to this item, this finding may suggest that family-oriented policies and practices which are viewed by members as restrictive of or interfering with their personal and family-related autonomy and privacy may actually lower the level of member satisfaction with the military way of life.

Although the present investigation was largely exploratory, its findings should help guide further research into better understanding how satisfaction with the environment for families impacts upon the level of overall satisfaction with the military way of life. The results of the analysis certainly suggest that policies for families may have a differential effect on the level of member satisfaction with the military way of life across population subgroups. As a consequence, policies and practices directed toward family issues may need to be tailored to specific population subgroups to maximize their chances for a positive impact on Army-related outcome variables, such as soldier retention and individual- and unit-level readiness. In some population subgroups, intervention efforts might be better prioritized and directed toward other quality of life issues besides family life in order to achieve desired Army-related outcomes.

Further research should extend the present analysis to include civilian spouses of active-duty members as the unit of analysis. It should also move to examine the indirect as well as the direct effects of satisfaction with the environment for families on the dependent variable: overall satisfaction with the military as a way of life.

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APPENDIX A: Survey Items

Quality-of-Military-Life Indicators and Satisfaction with the Military Way of Life.

Below is a list of issues particular to a military way of life. Considering current policies, please indicate your level of satisfaction/dissatisfaction with each issue.

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Neither Satisfied Nor Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
Personal freedom	O	O	O	O	O
Acquaintances/friendships	O	O	O	O	O
Work group/co-workers	O	O	O	O	O
Assignment stability	O	O	O	O	O
Pay and allowances	O	O	O	O	O
Environment for families	O	O	O	O	O
Frequency of moves	O	O	O	O	O
Retirement benefits	O	O	O	O	O
Opportunity to serve one's country	O	O	O	O	O
Satisfaction with current job	O	O	O	O	O
Promotion opportunities	O	O	O	O	O
Job training/in-service training	O	O	O	O	O
Job security	O	O	O	O	O
Working/environmental conditions	O	O	O	O	O
Post service educational benefits (VEAP)	O	O	O	O	O
Medical care	O	O	O	O	O
Dental care	O	O	O	O	O
Commissary services	O	O	O	O	O

Now, taking all things together, how satisfied are you with the military as a way of life?

O Very Dissatisfied
O Dissatisfied
O Somewhat Dissatisfied
O Neither Dissatisfied Nor Satisfied
O Somewhat Satisfied
O Satisfied
O Very Satisfied